

No 11 3

THE

PRINCIPLES

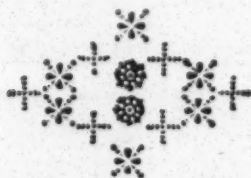
OF A

METHODIST.

By JOHN WESLEY, M. A.

Occasioned by a Pamphlet intituled, *A brief History of
the Principles of METHODISM.*

THE FOURTH EDITION.



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To the R E A D E R.

1. *I* Have often wrote on controverted points before; but not with an eye to any particular person. So that this is the first time I have appeared in controversy, properly so called. Indeed I have not wanted occasion to do it before. Particularly, when, after many slabs in the dark, I was publicly attacked, not by an open enemy, but by my own familiar friend. But I could not answer him. I could only cover my face and say, *Καὶ σὺ εἰ ἐκείνους*. *Καὶ σὺ τέκνον*. Art thou also among them? Art thou, my son?

2. I now tread an untried path with fear and trembling; fear, not of my adversary, but of myself. I fear my own spirit, lest “I fall, where many mightier have been slain.” I never knew one man (or but one) write controversy, with what I thought a right spirit. Every disputant seems to think, (as every soldier) that he may hurt his opponent as much as he can: nay, that he ought to do his worst to him, or he cannot make the best of his own cause: that, so he do not belie or wilfully misrepresent him, he must expose him as far as he is able. It is enough, we suppose, if we do not shew heat or passion against our adversary. But, not to despise him, or endeavour to make others do so, is quite a work of supererogation.

3. But ought these things to be so? (I speak on the Christian scheme) Ought we not to love our neighbour as ourselves? And does a man cease to be our neighbour, because he is of a different opinion? Nay, and declares

To the READER

himself so to be? Ought we not, for all this, to do to him, as we would he should do to us? But do we ourselves love to be exposed, or set in the worst light? Would we willingly be treated with contempt? If not, why do we treat others thus? And yet who scruples it? Who does not hit every blow he can, however foreign to the merits of the cause? Who, in controversy, casts the mantle of love over the nakedness of his brother? Who keeps steadily and uniformly to the question, without ever striking at the person? Who shews in every sentence, that he loves his brother, only less than the truth?

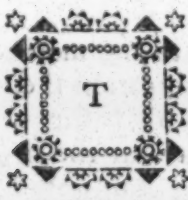
4. I have made a little faint essay towards this. I have a brother, who is as my own soul. My desire is, in every thing I say, to look upon Mr. Tucker as in his place, and to speak no tittle concerning the one, in any other spirit than I would speak concerning the other. But whether I have attained this or no, I know not; for my heart is deceitful, and desperately wicked. If I have spoken any thing in another spirit, I pray God it may not be laid to my charge; and that it may not condemn me in that day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be made manifest! Mean while, my heart's desire and prayer to God is, that both I, and all who think it their duty to oppose me, may put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us.



T H E



THE
P R I N C I P L E S
O F A
M E T H O D I S T :

I.  HERE has lately appeared in the world a Tract intitled, *A brief History of the principles of Methodism*. I doubt not but the writer's design, was good, and believe he has a real desire to know the truth. And the manner wherein he pursues that design is, generally calm and dispassionate. He is indeed in several mistakes ; but as many of these are either of small consequence themselves, or do not immediately relate to me, it is not my concern to mention them. All of any consequence which relates to me, I think, falls under three heads :

First, That I believe Justification by Faith alone ;

Secondly, That I believe Sinless perfection ; and

Thirdly, That I believe Inconsistencies.—Of each of these I will speak as plainly as I can.

First, That I believe *Justification by faith alone*. This I allow : For I am firmly persuaded, That every man of the offspring of *Adam* is very far gone from Original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil : That this corruption of our

ture, in every person born into the world, deserves God's Wrath and damnation : That therefore if ever we receive the remission of our sins, and are accounted righteous before God, it must be only for the merits of Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings of any kind. Nay, I am persuaded, That all works done before Justification, have in them the nature of sin ; and that consequently, till he is justified, a man has no power to do any work which is pleasing and acceptable to God.

3. To express my meaning a little more at large. I believe, Three things must go together in our Justification : Upon God's part, his great mercy and grace ; upon CHRIST's part, the satisfaction of God's Justice, by the offering his body, and shedding his blood, *and fulfilling the law of God perfectly* ; and upon our part, true and living faith in the merits of JESUS CHRIST. So that in our justification there is not only God's mercy and grace, but his Justice also. And so the grace of God does not shut out the righteousness of God in our Justification, but only shut out the righteousness of man, that is, the righteousness of our works.

4. And therefore St. Paul requires nothing on the part of man, but only *a true and living Faith*. Yet this Faith does not shut out Repentance, Hope, and Love, which are joined with Faith in every man that is justified. But it shuts them out from the office of justifying. So that although they are all present together in him that is justified, yet they justify not altogether.

5. Neither does Faith shut out Good works, necessarily to be done afterwards. But *we may not do them to this intent, To be justified by doing them*. Our Justification comes freely, of the mere mercy of God: For whereas all the world was not able to pay any part towards their ransom, it pleased him, without any of our deserving, to prepare for us *Christ's body and blood*, whereby our ransom might be paid, *his Law fulfilled, and his justice satisfied*. CHRIST therefore is now the righteousness of all them that truly believe
in

in him. *He for them paid the ransom by his death. He for them fulfilled the law in his life.* So that now in Him, and by Him, every Believer may be called a fulfiller of the Law.

6. But let it be observed, the true sense of those words, *We are justified by Faith in Christ only*, is not, that this our own act, *To believe in Christ*, or this our Faith which is within us justifies us (for that were, to account ourselves to be justified by some act or virtue that is within us:) But that altho' we have Faith hope, and love within us, and do ever so many good works, yet we must renounce the merit of all, of Faith, Hope, Love, and all other virtues and good works, which we either have done, shall do, or can do, as far too weak to deserve our justification: For which therefore we must trust only in God's mercy, and the merits of CHRIST. For it is he alone that taketh away our sins. To Him alone are we to go for this; forsaking all our virtues, good words, thoughts and works, and putting our trust in CHRIST only.

7. In strictness, therefore, neither our Faith nor our works justify us, *i. e.* deserve the remission of our sins. But God Himself justifies us, of his own mercy, thro' the merits of his Son only. Nevertheless, because by Faith we embrace the promise of God's mercy, and of the remission of our sins, therefore the Scripture says, *That Faith does justify*, yea, *Faith without works*. And as it is all one to say, *Faith without works*, and *Faith alone justifies us*, therefore the antient fathers from time to time speaks thus; *Faith alone justifies us*. And because we receive Faith, thro' the only merits of CHRIST, and not thro' the merit of any virtue we have, or work we do; therefore in that respect we renounce, as it were, again, Faith, Works, and all other virtues. For our corruption thro' Original Sin is so great, that all our faith, charity, words and works, cannot merit or deserve any part of our justification for us. And therefore we thus speak, humbling ourselves before God, and giving CHRIST all the glory of our justification.

8. But it should also be observed, What that Faith is, whereby we are justified. Now that Faith which brings not forth good works, is not a living Faith, but a dead and devilish one. For even the Devils believe, "That CHRIST was born of a virgin, that he wrought all kind of miracles, declaring himself to be very God, that for our sakes He died and rose again, and ascended into Heaven, and at the end of the world shall come again, to judge the quick and the dead." This the devils believe, and so they believe all that is written in the Old and New Testament. And yet still, for all this Faith, they are but Devils. They remain still in their damnable estate, lacking the true Christian Faith.

9. The true Christian Faith is, not only to believe the Holy Scriptures and the articles of our Faith are true, but also to have *a sure Trust and confidence to be saved from everlasting Damnation by CHRIST*, whereof doth follow a loving heart, to obey his commandments. And this Faith neither any Devil hath, nor any wicked man. No ungodly man hath or can have this *sure Trust and confidence in God, that by the merits of CHRIST his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of GOD*.

10. This is what I believe (and have believed for some years) concerning *Justification by Faith alone*. I have chose to expresse it in the words of a little treatise published several years ago, as being the most authentic proof, both of my past and present sentiments. If I err herein, let those who are better informed calmly point out my error to me: And I trust I shall not shut my eyes against the light, from whatsoever side it comes.

11. The second thing laid to my charge is, That *I believe sinless perfection*. I will simply declare what I do believe concerning this also, and leave unprejudiced men to judge.

12. My last and most deliberate thoughts on this head were published a few years since, in these words:

1. "Perhaps

1. " Perhaps the general prejudice against *Chri-*
 " *tian Perfection* may chiefly arise from a misappre-
 " hension of the *nature* of it. We willingly allow,
 " and continually declare, there is no *such* perfection
 " in this life, as implies either a dispensation from
 " doing good, and attending all the ordinances of
 " God; or a freedom from ignorance, mistake,
 " temptation, and a thousand infirmities necessarily
 " connected with flesh and blood.

2. " First, We not only allow, but *earnestly con-*
 " *tend*, (as for the faith once delivered to the saints)
 " that there is no such perfection in this life, as im-
 " plies any dispensation from attending all the ordi-
 " nances of God, or from *doing good unto all men,*
 " *while we have time*, though *especially unto the house-*
 " *hold of faith*. And whosoever they are, who have
 " taught otherwise, we are convinced are not taught
 " of God. We dare not receive them, neither bid
 " them God speed, lest we be *partakers of their evil*
 " *deeds*. We believe, that not only the *babes in*
 " *Christ*, who have newly found redemption in his
 " blood, but those also, who are *grown up unto per-*
 " *fect men, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness*
 " *of Christ*, are indispensibly obliged, (and that they
 " are obliged thereto, is their glory and crown of re-
 " joicing) as oft as they have opportunity, to eat
 " bread and drink wine, *in remembrance of him*; to
 " search the scriptures; by fasting (as well as tempe-
 " rance) to keep their bodies under, and bring them in-
 " to subjection; and above all, to pour out their souls
 " in prayer, both *secretly*, and *in the great congre-*
 " *gation*.

3. " We secondly believe, and therefore speak,
 " and that unto *all men*, and *with much assurance*,
 " that there is no *such* perfection in this life, as im-
 " plies an entire deliverance, either from ignorance
 " or mistake, in things not essential to salvation, or
 " salvation, or from manifold temptations, or from
 " numberless infirmities, wherewith the corruptible
 " body, more or less, presses down the soul. This
 " is the same thing, which we have spoken from the
 " beginning: if any teach otherwise, *they are not of*

us. We cannot find any ground in scripture to suppose, that any inhabitant of an house of clay is wholly exempt either from bodily infirmities, or from ignorance of many things; or to imagine any mere man is incapable of mistake, or of falling into divers temptations: no; *the disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his Lord. It is enough, that every one, who is perfect, shall be as his master.*

4. " But what then, it may be asked, do you mean by *one that is perfect*, or *one that is as his master*? We mean, one in whom is *the mind which was in Christ*, and who so *walketh, as he also walked*; a man that *bath clean hands and a pure heart*; or that is *cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit*; one in whom there is no occasion of stumbling, and who accordingly doth not commit sin. To declare this a little more particularly: we understand by that scriptural expression, a *perfect man*, one in whom God hath fulfilled his faithful word, *From all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. — I will also save you from all your uncleannesses.* We understand hereby, one whom God hath sanctified throughout, even in body, soul, and spirit; one who *walketh in the light, as he is in the light*, in whom is no darkness at all; *the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, having cleansed him from all sin.*

5. " This man can now testify to all mankind, *I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.* He is holy, as God who hath called him is holy, both in heart and in all manner of conversation. He loveth the Lord his God with all his heart, and serveth him with all his strength. He loveth his neighbour [every man] as himself; yea, as Christ loved us: them in particular, that despitefully use him and persecute him, because they know not the Son, neither the Father. Indeed his soul is all love, filled with bowels of mercies, kindness, meekness, gentleness, long suffering. And his life agreeth thereto, full of the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labour of love. And whatsoever he doth either in word or deed, he doth it all

“ *in the name, in the love and power of the Lord Jesus. In a word, he doth the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven.*

“ This it is to be a *perfect man*, to be *sanctified throughout, created anew in Christ Jesus*: even to have a heart so all-flaming with the love of God, (to use archbishop *Usher's* words) as continually to offer up every thought, word, and work, as a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable unto God thro' Christ. In every thought of our hearts, in every word of our tongues, in every work of our hands, *to shew forth his praise, who hath called us out of darkness, into his marvellous light!* O that both we, and all who seek the Lord Jesus in sincerity, may thus *be made perfect in one!*”

13. If there be any thing unscriptural in these words, any thing wild or extravagant, any thing contrary to the analogy of faith, or the experience of adult christians, let them *smite me friendly and reprove me*; let them impart to me of the clearer light God has given them. How knowest thou, O man, *but thou mayest gain thy brother?* But he may at length come to the knowledge of the truth? And thy labour of love, shewn forth with meekness of wisdom, may not be in vain?

14. There remains yet another charge against me, That I believe *Inconsistencies*: that my tenets, particularly concerning justification, are *contradictory to themselves*: that Mr. *Wesley*, “ since his return from Germany, has improved in the spirit of inconsistency. For then he published two treatises of Dr. *Barne's* the *calvinist* or *dominican* rather, who suffered in 1541; [Let us spare the ashes of the dead. Were I such a *dominican* as he was, I should rejoice too to die in the flames!] “ the first on “ *justification by faith only*, the other on *The sinfulness of man's natural will, and his utter inability to do works acceptable to God, until he be justified*. Which principles, if added to his former tenets” (nay, they need not be added to them, for they are the very same;) “ will give the whole a new vein of inconsistency, and make

“ the *contradictions* more gross and glaring than before.”

15. It will be necessary to speak more largely on this head, than on either of the preceding. And in order to speak as distinctly as I can, I propose taking the paragraphs one by one, as they lie before me.

16. (1) It is “ *asserted* that Mr. *Law's* system was the “ *creed* of the methodists.” But it is not *proved*. I had been eight years at *Oxford*, before I read any of Mr. *Law's* writings: and when I did, I was so far from making them my *creed*, that I had objections to almost every page. But all this time my manner was, to spend several hours a day, in reading the scripture in the original tongues. And hence my system (so termed) was wholly drawn, according to the light I then had.

17. It was in my passage to *Georgia*, I met with those *Moravian teachers*, who would have taught me the way of God more perfectly. But I understood them not. Neither on my arrival there, did they *infuse* any particularities into me, either about *justification*, or any thing else. For I came back with the same notions I went. And this I have explicitly acknowledged in my second journal, where some of my words are these*. “ When *Peter Bohler* as soon as I came to *London*, affirmed of true faith in Christ, (which is but one) that it had these two fruits inseparably attending it, “ *dominion over sin, and constant peace from a sense of forgiveness;*” I was quite amazed, and looked upon it as a new gospel. If this was so, it was clear I had no faith. But I was not willing to be convinced of this: therefore I disputed with all my might, and laboured to prove that faith might be where these were not; especially where that sense of forgiveness was not: for all the scriptures relating to this, I had been long since taught to construe away, and to call all *presbyterians* who

who spoke otherwise. Besides, I well saw, no one could, (in the nature of things) have such a sense of forgiveness, and not *feel* it. But I felt it not. If then there was no faith without this, all my pretensions to faith dropt at once."

18. (2) Yet it was not *Peter Bohler* who convinced me that *conversion* (I mean justification) *was* an *instantaneous work*. On the contrary, when I was convinced of the nature and fruits of justifying faith, still " * I could not comprehend what he spoke of an *instantaneous work*. I could not understand how this faith should be given in a moment: how a man could *at once* be thus turned from darkness to light, from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost. I searched the scriptures again, touching this *very* thing, particularly the *Acts of the Apostles*. But to my utter astonishment, I found scarce any instances there of other than *instantaneous* conversions; scarce any other so slow as that of *St. Paul*, who was three days in the pangs of the new-birth. I had but *one* retreat left; viz. "*Thus, I grant, God wrought in the first ages of christianity: but the times are changed. What reason have I to believe He works in the same manner now?*"

" But on *Sunday 22*, I was beat out of this retreat too, by the concurring evidence of several living witnesses, who testified God *had thus wrought in themselves*: giving them *in a moment*, such a faith in the blood of his son, as translated them out of darkness into light, out of sin and fear into holiness and happiness. Here ended my disputing. I could now only cry out, "*Lord, help thou my unbelief.*"—The remaining part of this section, with the third and fourth, contain my own words; to which I still subscribe.

And if there is a mistake in the fifth, it is not material.

* Second Journal, Page 19.

19. (6) It is true, that "on *Wednesday July 12* the Count spoke to this effect :

1. Justification is the forgiveness of sins :
2. The moment a man flies to Christ, he is justified :
3. And has peace with God, but not always joy :
4. Nor perhaps may he know he is justified, 'till long after :
5. For the assurance of it is distinct from justification itself :
6. But others may know he is justified, by his power over sin, by his seriousness, his love of the brethren, and his hunger and thirst after righteousness, which alone proves the spiritual life to be begun.
7. To be justified is the same thing as to be born of God : when a man is awakened, he is begotten of God, and his fear, and sorrow, and sense of the wrath of God, are the pangs of the new-birth."

20. It is true also, that I then recollected what *P. Bobler* had often said on this head, which was to this effect :

1. When a man has living faith in Christ, then he is justified.
2. This is always given in a moment :
3. And in that moment he has peace with God.
4. Which he cannot have without knowing that he has it :
5. And being born of God he sinneth not.
6. Which deliverance from sin he cannot have without knowing that he has it.

21. I did not apprehend it possible, for any man living to have imagined, that I believed *both these accounts* : the words whereof I had purposely so ranged and divided into short sentences, that the gross, irreconcilable difference between them, might be plain to the meanest reader. I cannot therefore but be a little surprized at the strength of that prejudice, which could prevent any one's seeing, that in opposition

sition to the Count's opinion (which in many respects I wholly disapproved of) I quoted the words of one of his own church, which, if true, overturn it altogether.

22. I have nothing to object to the quotations made in the seventh, eighth, and ninth Sections: In the tenth are these words: "Now since Mr. *Wesley* went so far, to gather such materials together, let us see what was the *System* (or rather the *Medley*) of principles he had to return with to *England*."

Of the Assurance of Justification.

I believe that Conversion is an instantaneous work. And that the moment a man is converted, or has living Faith in CHRIST, he is justified. Which faith a man cannot have, without knowing that he hath it.

Yet I believe he may not know that he is justified, (*i. e.* that he has living faith) 'till a long time after.

I believe also that the moment a man is justified, he has peace with God.

Which he cannot have without knowing that he has it.

Yet I believe he may not know that he is justified (*i. e.* that he has peace with God) 'till a long time after.

I believe to be justified is the same thing as to be born of God.

And being born of God, he sinneth not.

Which Deliverance from sin he cannot have without knowing it.

Yet I believe he may not know that he is justified (*i. e.* delivered from sin) 'till a long time after.

Though I believe that others may know that he is justified by his power over sin, his seriousness, and love of the Brethren.

23. "*Of the Conditions of Justification.*

I believe that CHRIST *formed in us* subordinately to Christ *given for us* (*i. e.* our own inherent Righteousness

ousness subordinate to Christ's *Merits*) ought to be insisted upon, as necessary to our Justification.

And it is just and right that a man should be humble and penitent, and have a broken and contrite heart (*i. e.* should have CHRIST *formed in him*) before he can expect to be justified.

And that this penitence and contrition is the work of the Holy Ghost."

" Yet I believe that all this is nothing towards, and has no influence on our Justification.

Again, I believe that in order to justification, I must go strait to *Christ* with all my ungodliness, and plead nothing else:

Yet I believe that we should not insist upon any thing we *do* or *feel*, as if it were necessarily *previous* to Justification."

24. " *Of the Effects of Justification.*

I believe that Justification is the same thing as to be born of God. Yet a man may have a *strong assurance* that he is justified, and not be able to affirm, that he is born of God.

A man may be fully assured that his sins are forgiven, yet may not be able to tell the hour or day when he received this full assurance, because it may grow up in him by degrees.—Tho' he can remember, that from the time this full assurance was confirmed in him, he never lost it, no not for a moment.

A man may have a weak faith at the same time that he hath peace with God, *not one uneasy Thought*, and Freedom from sin, *not one unholy desire*."

" A man may be justified (*i. e.* born of God) who has not a clean heart (*i. e.* is not sanctified.)

He may be justified (*i. e.* born of God) and not have the Indwelling of the Spirit."

25. I entirely agree, "That the foregoing creed is a *very extraordinary and odd composition*." But it is not mine. I neither composed it, nor believe it: as I doubt not every impartial Reader will be fully convinced, when we shall have gone over it, once more, step by step.

The parts of it which I do believe I shall barely repeat: On the others it will be needful to add a few words.

Of

Of the Assurances of Justification.

" I believe that conversion (meaning thereby Justification) is an instantaneous work: and that the moment a man has living faith in Christ, he is converted or justified. (So the proposition must be expressed to make it sense.) Which faith he cannot have, without knowing that he has it."

" Yet I believe, he may not know that he has it till long after." This I deny: I believe no such thing.

" I believe the moment a man is justified, he hath peace with God :

" Which he cannot have without knowing that he has it :"

" Yet I believe, he may not know that he has it till long after." This again I deny. I believe it not. Nor *Michael Linner* neither. To clear whom intirely, one need only read his own words.

" About fourteen years ago, I was more than ever convinced, that I was wholly different from what God required me to be. I consulted his word again and again; but it spoke nothing but condemnation; till at last I could not read, nor indeed do any thing else, having no hope and no spirit left in me. I had been in this state for several days, when being musing by myself, those words came strongly into my mind, *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, to the end that all who believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* I thought *all*? Then I am one. Then *he* is given for *me*. But I am a sinner. And he came to save sinners. Immediately my burden dropped off, and my heart was at rest.

" But the full assurance of faith I had not yet, nor for the two years I continued in *Moravia*. When I was driven out thence by the *Jesuits*, I retired thither, and was soon after received into the church. And here after some time it pleased our Lord to manifest himself more clearly to my soul; and

and gave me that full sense of acceptance in him, which excludes all doubt and fear.

"Indeed the leading of the spirit is different in different souls. His more usual method, I believe, is, to give in one and the same moment, forgiveness of sins, and a full assurance of that forgiveness. Yet in many he works as he did in me: giving first the remission of sins, and after some weeks, or months, or years, the full assurance of it." *

All I need observe is, that the *first sense of forgiveness* is often mixed with doubt or fear. But the *full assurance of faith* excludes all doubt and fear, as the very term implies.

"Therefore, instead of "he may not know that he has peace with God till long after," it should be (to agree with *Michael Linner's* words) "he may not have, till long after, that full assurance of faith, which excludes all doubt and fear."

"I believe, to be justified is the same as to be born of God.

"And he that is born of God sinneth not.

"Which deliverance from sin he cannot have, without knowing that he has it."

"Yet I believe he may not know it till long after." This also I utterly deny.

26. Of the Conditions of Justification.

"I believe that Christ *formed in us* ought to be *insisted on, as necessary to our justification.*"

I no more believe this, than *Christian David* does, whose words concerning it are these:

"It pleased God to shew me, that *Christ in us, and Christ for us*, ought to be both insisted on:"

But I clearly saw, *we ought not to insist on any thing we feel*, any more than any thing *we do*, as if it were *necessarily* previous to our *justification*.

"And before a man can expect to be justified, he should be humble and penitent, and have a broken and

and contrite heart; that is, should have *Christ formed in him.*" No; that is quite another thing. I believe every man is *penitent*, before he is *justified*; he *repents*, before he *believes* the gospel. But it is never *before*, and generally *long after* he is justified, that Christ is *formed in him.*

"And that this penitence and contrition is the work of the Holy Ghost."

"Yet I believe all this is nothing towards, and has no influence on our justification."

Christian David's words are, "observe, this is not the foundation. It is not this by which (for the sake of which) you are justified. This is not the righteousness, this is no part of the righteousness, by which you are reconciled to God. You grieve for your sins. You are deeply humbled. Your heart is broken. Well: but *all this is nothing to your justification.*" The words immediately following fix the sense of this otherwise exceptionable sentence) "The remission of your sins *is not owing to this cause*, either in whole or in part. Your humiliation *has no influence on that.*" Not *as a cause*; so the very last words explain it.

"Again, I believe that in order to obtain justification, I must go straight to Christ, with all my ungodliness, and plead *nothing else.*"

"Yet I believe we should not insist upon any thing we *do* or *feel*, as if it were necessarily previous to justification. No, nor on any thing *else.* So the whole tenor of *Christian David's* words implies."

Of the Effects of Justification.

27. "I believe a man may have a strong assurance he is justified, and not be able to affirm he is a child of God."

Feder's words are these: "I found my heart at rest, in good hope that my sins were forgiven; of which I had a stronger assurance six weeks after." (True, compa-

comparatively stronger, tho' still mixed with doubt and fear.) "But I dare not affirm I am a child of God." I see no inconsistency in all this. Many such instances I know at this day. I myself was one for some time.

"A man may be fully assured that his sins are forgiven, yet may not be able to tell the day when he received this full assurance; because it grew up in him by degrees." (Of this also I know a few other instances.) "But from the time this full assurance *was confirmed in him*, he never lost it." Very true, and, I think, consistent.

Neusser's own words are, "In him I found true rest to my soul, being fully assured, that all my sins were forgiven. Yet I cannot tell the hour or day, when I first received that full assurance. For it was not given me at first, neither at once;" (not in its fulness) "but grew up in me by degrees. And *from the time it was confirmed in me*, I have never lost it, having never since doubted, no, not for a moment."

"A man may have a weak faith, at the same time that he has peace with God, and no unholy desires."

A man may be justified, who has not a clean heart, neither the indwelling of the spirit.

28. (11.) This I do verily believe is *sound* divinity, agreeable both to scripture and experience. And I believe it is consistent with itself. As to the "hundred other absurdities which *might be* fully and fairly made out," it will be time enough to consider them when they are produced.

29. (12, 13) But whether I have succeeded in attempting to reconcile these things or no, I verily think Mr. *Tucker* has. I desire not a more consistent account of my principles, than he has himself given in the following words:

"Our spiritual state should be considered, and distinctly, under each of these views.

1. "Be-

1. "Before *justification*; in which state we may be said to be unable to do any thing *acceptable to God*: because then we can do nothing but come to Christ. Which ought not to be considered as doing any thing but as *supplicating* (or waiting) to receive a power of doing for the time to come."

"For the preventing grace of God, which is common to all, is sufficient to bring us to Christ, though it is not sufficient to carry us any further, till we are justified."

2. After *Justification*. The moment a man comes to Christ (by faith) he is justified, and born again; that is, he is born again in the *imperfect* sense (for there are two [if not more] degrees of regeneration.) And he has power over all the stirrings and motions of sin, but not a total freedom from them. He has Christ with him, but not Christ in him. Therefore he hath not yet, in the full and proper sense, a new and clean heart, or the indwelling of the Spirit. But being exposed to various temptations, he may, and will fall again from this condition, if he doth not attain to a more excellent gift."*

3. Sanctification; the last and highest state of *perfection* in this life. For then are the faithful born again in the full and perfect sense. Then have they the indwelling of the spirit. Then is there given unto them a new and clean heart, and the struggle between the old and new man is over. §

* "Mr. Charles Wesley (the note says) was not persuaded of the truth of the *Moravian faith*, 'till some time after his brother's return from *Germany*." There is a great mistake in this. I returned not from *Germany* 'till Sat. Sept. 16. Whereas my brother was fully persuaded of the truth of the *Moravian faith* (so called) on *Wednes. May 3.* preceding. The note adds, "This (*i. e.* justifying faith) he received but very lately." This also is a mistake. What we believe to be justifying faith he received May 21, 1738.

See Second Journal, Pages 20, 26.

§ The next note runs thus: "Mr. Wesley has such

30. (14) That I may say many things which have been said before, and perhaps by *Calvin* or *Arminius*, by *Montanus* or *Barclay*, or the archbishop of *Cambray*, is highly probable. But it cannot thence be inferred, That I hold “a medley of all their principles; *Calvinism*, *Arminianism*, *Montanism*, *Quakerism*, *Quietism*, all thrown together.” There might as well have been added, *Judaism*, *Mahometanism*, *Paganism*. It would have made the period rounder, and been full as easily proved, I mean asserted. For other proof is not yet produced.

31. I

such a peculiar turn and tendency towards inconsistencies in his principles, that in his preface to *Haliburton's* life (wrote Feb. 9, 1738-9, just after his return from Germany) he contradicts all that he has said elsewhere for this *sinless perfection*, viz. “But it may be said, *The gospel covenant does not promise entire freedom from sin*. What do you mean by the word sin? The infection of nature? Or those numberless weaknesses and follies, sometimes (improperly) termed *sins of infirmity*? If you mean only this, you say most true. We shall not put off these, but with our bodies. But if you mean, it does not promise entire freedom from sin, in its proper sense, or from committing sin; this is by no means true, unless the scripture be false. For thus it is written, *Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin*. (Unless he lose the Spirit of Adoption, if not finally, yet for a while, as did this child of God) *For his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God*. He cannot sin, so long as he keepeth himself, for then the wicked one toucheth him not.”

The question is not, Whether this be right or wrong? But whether it contradict any thing I have said elsewhere? Thrice I have spoken expressly on this subject; in a sermon, and in two prefaces. If in any of these I have contradicted what I said before, I will own the former assertion as a mistake.

31. I pass

31. I pass over the smaller mistakes which occur in the fifteenth and sixteenth paragraphs, together with the prophecy or prognostication, concerning the approaching divisions and downfall of the *Methodists*. What follows to the end, concerning the ground of our hope, is indeed of greater importance. But we have not as yet the strength of the cause. The dissertation promised is still behind. Therefore as my work is great, and my time short, I wave that dispute for the present. And perhaps, when I shall have received farther light, I may be convinced, That "Gospel-holiness (as Mr. *Tucker* believes) is a necessary qualification, antecedent to justification: and that Christ did not *in any degree* fulfil the terms of justification *in our stead*; but having purchased for us sufficient powers and abilities to perform them, then left us to fulfil them ourselves." This appears to me now to be directly opposite to the gospel of Christ. But I will endeavour, impartially to consider, what shall be advanced in defence of it. And may He who knoweth my simpleness teach me his way, and give me a right judgment in all things!

F I N I S.



